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ABSTRACT

This is a summary of the American Association of Community College's (AACC) Strategic Action Areas and corresponding initiatives. Strategies for Action Area I (National and International Recognition and Advocacy for Community Colleges) focus primarily on the creation of task forces to address key legislative issues in higher education. Examples include the Higher Education Act, Workforce Investment Act, Hope Scholarship tax credits, and Pell Grants. Strategic Action Area II (Learning and Accountability) is being addressed through an AACC and Microsoft national training program for information technology community college faculty. Strategic Action Area III concerns leadership development, and the association is moving forward with plans for a Future Leaders Institute, Leadership Certification Program, and the publication of a monograph on community college chief executive officer employment contracts. In order to address Economic and Workforce Development (Strategic Action Area IV), AACC is working on a number of publications, conferences, and technology training programs that focus on fostering business partnerships and employment opportunities. Information is also provided on new AACC Membership initiatives (Action Area V) and International and Intercultural Education programs (Action Area VI). Examples include the publication of an International Student Study Guide, the launching of a international student web site, and series of international recruitment fairs. (RC)

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President's Report on AACC Strategic Action Areas and Initiatives
August 2002

Strategic Action Area I: National and International Recognition and Advocacy for Community Colleges

1. The two Board-created ad hoc task forces continue their work on the upcoming reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, Workforce Investment Act, and Carl Perkins Act. Since the first meetings in late March, a variety of subgroups have held conference calls and further refined positions on particularly difficult issues. The task forces are slated to meet just prior to the August AACC Board meetings.

2. AACC has continued to work aggressively on the extension of the 1996 welfare reform law. The House of Representatives has passed TANF legislation that AACC considers regressive, while the Senate Finance Committee has approved a much better bill as far as education and training are concerned. The Senate legislation, however, has uncertain floor prospects. The Senate bill includes many of the provisions that AACC has been seeking for years, and, if enacted, would represent a marked improvement over current law.

3. AACC has worked to secure inclusion in both House and Senate Fiscal Year (FY) 2002 Supplemental Appropriations bills of $1 billion in funding for the Pell Grant shortfall. This is a significant and, to some extent, unexpected, achievement. The supplemental appropriations bill should be cleared by Congress sometime in July. Alternatively, prospects for large funding increases in FY 2003, which begins October 1, do not look good at this time. AACC's top priorities continue to be Pell Grants, Title III-A of the HEA, and Perkins Act and Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funding.

4. AACC has submitted to DOL and ED a detailed proposal with our recommended changes to the "subsequent eligibility" requirements in the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and the "performance indicators" in the Carl D. Perkins Act. The proposal was thoroughly vetted with interested groups within AACC's membership, and is designed to ease reporting mandates while also maintaining accountability. The proposal seeks the same reporting requirements for both the WIA and the Perkins Act. AACC has also submitted to DOL a tentative proposal for the reauthorization of the WIA.

5. AACC has submitted comments to the Immigration and Naturalization Service on proposed regulations implementing the Student and Exchange Visitors Information System (SEVIS). AACC is closely monitoring implementation of the SEVIS system, which will hopefully provide closer tracking of foreign students without creating significant new administrative burdens for community colleges.

6. The Association continues to work to enlist co-sponsors to H.R. 2219, legislation that would expand Hope Scholarship tax credits so as to greatly benefit community college students. The legislation now has 89 co-sponsors. AACC has also identified a Senate sponsor of companion legislation, and is waiting for the right moment to introduce that bill.

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7. AACC has developed and implemented a college media outreach campaign that has resulted in national exposure of the community college budget issue. To date, national media placements by AACC include *USA Today*, the Associated Press, *The Wall Street Journal* (two articles April 18 and 24), and the *Boston Globe*.

8. As a follow-up to the free "Crisis on Campus" teleconference AACC sponsored and aired last year, the Association has contracted with the LeCroy Center for Educational Telecommunications to produce a three-part teleconference series for 2002-2003. Topic areas include "How to Write Grants That Get Funded" (Dec. 5), "Telling Our Story, Making Our Case: Advocacy and Outreach for Community Colleges" (Jan. 23), and "Creating Relationships, Forging Partnerships: The Community College and Local Business" (May 1). Member cost for the series will be $825.

9. AACC has significantly broadened the scope of its Corporate Program, increasing the minimum for participation from $2,000 to $5,000 and adding a top level of $50,000 and above. To enhance the new framework, Communications developed a new corporate brochure to talk about program benefits, along with two companion brochures—one to provide a general argument for "Why Support Community Colleges" and another listing specific AACC sponsorship opportunities for 2003. A direct mail campaign to lapsed and prospective corporate members was mailed in June, and future mailings will target the architects/contractors and health care industries.

10. In cooperation with CRD and ACCT and with underwriting from TIAA-CREF, AACC has developed a new guide to encourage establishment of endowments at community colleges. The brochure will be made available online to member colleges and will be used by AACC and ACCT in conjunction with other outreach efforts.

11. AACC will participate in a back-to-school Consumer Report radio series to promote community colleges as the answer to the need for quality higher education at affordable prices. The series will be distributed to more than 1,000 radio stations across the nation and will also be translated into Spanish for online availability through Radio Espacio, a national electronic distribution service for Spanish-language radio.

12. AACC is participating in a new Ford Foundation/Education Commission of the States community college effort entitled, Bridges to Opportunity Initiative. Six states were chosen to participate in an effort to recast public policy to enhance the integration of remedial, workforce, and academic missions in order to promote academic advancement of disadvantaged students. The six states are Colorado, Kentucky, Louisiana, New Mexico, Ohio and Washington State.

13. An invitational workshop on cybersecurity was held June 26-28 in Washington, D.C. Jointly sponsored by the National Science Foundation and AACC, the workshop examined the role of community colleges in cybersecurity education. Close to 100 attendees from higher education, business, and government participated in this high-profile event to advise the NSF on how resources at community colleges could be harnessed and expanded to contribute to the nation's security. Keynoters came from the White House, Microsoft, and the National Academy of Engineering. Background papers and Webcasts of the keynote presentations are available at www.aacc.nche.edu/cybersecurity. A full report of the conference will be available in October.

14. AACC staff members are working with the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU) and other organizations to develop strategies to demonstrate to the Administration and Congress the role that colleges and universities are already playing in civic engagement and community service and to discuss ways to document and encourage further volunteerism. A back-to-school event is planned. A related but separate activity is also under way at AACC: a guidebook for community college faculty on how to infuse civic responsibility into coursework. Produced with funds from the Corporation for National and Community Service, this guide will be ready in the fall.

15. AACC is mentioned in the *Microsoft Giving Annual Report 2001*. AACC and Microsoft are hosting a July 16 meeting of corporate and foundation funders who are interested in community colleges. The meeting will be held in conjunction with the annual AACC/Microsoft Working Connections project conference in Redmond, Washington. It should be a good opportunity to showcase what community colleges can do in the areas of business partnerships, teaching and learning, and workforce development.

Strategic Action Area II: Learning and Accountability

1. At the request of the Lumina Foundation, AACC and AASCU are submitting a proposal August 1 for support of a year-long project on access to the baccalaureate. This follows the December 2001 roundtable meeting in Memphis. Proposed activities include: a joint invitational conference to focus on policy, practice, and context issues associated with access to the baccalaureate education, production and distribution of publications, and outreach activities to target audiences and national, state, and regional media.

2. With $1.3 million in start-up money from Microsoft, AACC is launching a national training program for IT faculty in community colleges. Called the Working Connections National IT Faculty Development Institute, it is a partnership among AACC, Microsoft, and the National Workforce Center for Emerging Technologies at Bellevue Community College. This professional development program, an outgrowth of the five-year-old Working Connections program, is designed to provide annual training and professional development opportunities for community college IT faculty in all 50 states. The institute will begin this summer in Washington State and Texas and will be extended to other states in future years.

3. AACC, with its partners, the Council for Independent Colleges and the Independent Colleges Office, just completed a successful second conference in Washington, D.C., for 28 colleges and universities engaged in the Teaching Scholar Partnership Program sponsored by the National Science Foundation. More than 120 college students, K-12 teachers, and higher education faculty and administrators shared lessons learned after a year of math/science/engineering/technology students serving as classroom resources in K-12 schools. The NSF is watching this pilot project closely for possible expansion.

Strategic Action Area III: Leadership Development

1. The report from the Board Leadership Task Force has been posted on the AACC web site and comments requested from the field. To date, no comments have been received.

2. AACC contracted with Desna Wallin to develop and coordinate the program for the first Future Leaders Institute, which is planned for July 2003, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Information about the program is forthcoming.

3. Part 2 of the AACC Leadership database is now available on the AACC web site. It contains information about over 30 short-term, non-degreed leadership programs and conferences. Combined with the degreed, university-based leadership programs, over 170 programs are listed.

4. AACC is moving forward on planning for a Leadership Certification Program that will certify professional development activities offered by AACC for multiple administrative levels. The program will integrate existing Presidents Academy events, and the new Future Leaders Institute and provide a framework for new professional development tracts at the AACC Annual Convention. AACC is consulting with Joan Knapp, a certification expert who formerly worked with ETS and has developed skills standards for such groups as the American Culinary Federation and the National Institute for Literacy.

5. AACC has contracted with Desna Wallin to begin work on a monograph on the topic of CEO employment contracts. The publication will include information gathered from an AACC survey of community college CEOs that asked questions specific to benefits and protective clauses included in their own contracts. Poorly written employment contracts often do not provide the protection needed for a CEO to perform the best job for a college or a district. The chapters will be written in clearly understandable language and will be reviewed by attorneys. The publication will be endorsed and marketed by both AACC and ACCT.

6. AACC has received a two-year grant from the Kellogg Foundation for $200,000 to support leadership development activities tied to recommendations of the New Expeditions project as outlined in *The Knowledge Net: Connecting Communities, Learners, and Colleges.*

7. The most recent Briefs including, *Career Paths for Community College Leaders* and *The Community College Presidency 2001*, were mailed to CEOs at all AACC member colleges in May.

Strategic Action Area IV: Economic and Workforce Development

1. A number of mostly positive developments have occurred related to the AD Nursing issue. Following board approval of the National Action Plan for the Nursing/Allied Health Advocacy Initiative, AACC sent information invoices requesting voluntary contributions from the colleges to finance the expanded advocacy effort. To date, more than $100,000 has been collected. The search for a nurse advocate, considered by AACC staff as the most critical element of the initiative has begun, and rèsumès are already coming in. Additionally, more research is being planned specific to the nursing crisis, and up-to-date information on the progress of the national initiative is being posted regularly on the AACC web site.

   Also related to the nursing issue, AACC, ACCT, and N-OADN met with the Veterans Administration as specified in the MOU signed last year. The meeting was not entirely positive, and AACC is concerned that the VA is dragging its feet in fulfilling its obligation under the MOU. A letter was sent in early July to the Secretary expressing this concern and requesting a meeting.

AACC is receiving enthusiastic support from Sentara Healthcare, the largest integrated health care provider serving Virginia and North Carolina. Sentara's president sent letters to the governors of North Carolina and Virginia as well as to other key federal and state policy makers expressing confidence in and commitment to hire AD nurses for its 31 facilities. Colleges are being urged to use this outreach as a model in seeking endorsements from health care providers in their communities.

Finally, AACC and AACN have met and found some common ground that we hope will mitigate their stance to "differentiate practice" between AD and BS registered nurses. The Association plans to continue efforts to seek cooperation with the AACN and to have them moderate their positions.

2. AACC is continuing to monitor activities of the Transportation Security Administration and to seek opportunities for our colleges to participate in airport security screener training and other national security-related efforts. NCS Pearson Inc. was awarded a competitively procured contract in the amount of $103.4 million to provide an automated, web-based system for the recruitment and placement of personnel. Lockheed Martin has awarded a contract for the training component for the 30,000 new screeners needed by November.

3. Planning is under way for the next WDI, to be held at the Hilton San Diego Resort, California, January 29 - February 1, 2003. This event continues to be a popular event, attracting 400-500 registrants each year. The U.S. Department of Labor continues its support of WDI.

4. The DOL has prepared a Statement of Work for our continuing DOL grant. The most significant additions include partnering with the Employment Training Administration (ETA) in conducting forums with representatives of businesses in growth sectors of the economy, inventorying the capacity of community colleges to provide training to unemployed and dislocated workers as well as to new entrants to the workforce, and developing alternatives to current systems for the workforce investment system performance and accountability requirements for community colleges. AACC delivered accountability alternatives by the May 2002 deadline. Additionally, AACC staff participated in planning and delivery of community college components to the July 2002 DOL-sponsored Workforce Innovations Conference in Nashville. Finally, AACC and the National Alliance of Business (NAB) are collaborating to deliver the community college training capacity inventory and industry sector summits.

5. AACC intends to follow up on a recommendation from our Workforce Development Summit meeting of March 2001 to prepare a publication to help community college leaders establish mutually beneficial partnerships with local businesses. Bob McCabe has submitted a proposal to conduct the research and writing on this project. DOL has agreed to fund this project through a grant to the National Alliance of Business (NAB).

6. The Foundation (Southern Bell) awarded AACC $650,000 for a one-year technology workforce program targeted to individuals affected by the digital divide. The project, modeled after the AACC/Microsoft Working Connections project, will have its kickoff conference August 8-9 in Washington, D.C. Six member colleges that had existing programs that met SBC criteria will participate.

7. An eight-page brochure on the Working Connections program was developed for use at the foundation funders meeting in Seattle on July 16. It will be posted on the AACC web site.

Strategic Action Area V: Connectedness Across AACC Membership

1. By mid-August, AACC will have convened six workshops, institutes, and conferences involving approximately 135 colleges since the last Board meeting. These events all provide opportunities for participants to form personal and professional networks and share challenges and successes in technology, leadership, workforce development, and service learning and civic responsibility.

2. AACC's Founders' Circle Endowment continues to grow with gifts and pledges from 23 individuals totaling $84,000. A 39-member honorary committee has been enlisted to help promote the program. A solicitation mailing to the general AACC membership is planned for August. We will also be creating a visible recognition display at the AACC headquarters. Information is available on the Web page.

3. We are continuing our efforts to establish revenue-sharing agreements with companies that can provide quality services to our member colleges. We have concluded agreements with Youth Insurance Agency, Inc. (Student Insurance); Candidate Quality Management (video conferencing services for pre-screening and/or interviewing candidates); and Peterson's (providing information on colleges to prospective students). AACC has had pre-existing agreements with Herndon Associates (student insurance), National Video Communications (marketing community college downlink facilities for distance learning events); the Foundation for California Community Colleges (cooperative purchasing agreements); and 21st Century Leaders Profile (an assessment of leadership strengths).

   Other partnerships are being reviewed with Inter-ED (a research and environmental scan service); Secure Works (Internet security service); WEB-CE (custom Web content development services); and Forrest T. Jones (liability insurance) and others.

4. Following an intensive follow-up with colleges that had been members last year but have not yet paid for this year, AACC is very close to meeting its membership revenue projections for 2002. We currently are at 97.5 percent of our projection.

5. A new Research Brief, *Community College Engagement in Community Programs and Services*, reports the results of a national survey on ways that community colleges contribute to the quality of life and lifelong learning in their communities.

6. For the first time, AACC will conduct an on-site job fair in conjunction with its Annual Convention in Dallas. Colleges will be able to set up booths to provide information about position openings at their colleges. In tandem with the public fair, AACC will also make available private interview rooms for colleges that want to talk with interested applicants. An RFP to handle management of the job fair is being readied now.

Strategic Action Area VI: International and Intercultural Education

1. During the past few months, the new AACC international recruitment initiative was launched to assist member colleges in their international student recruiting efforts and to elevate the national and international profile of the Association and community colleges in global education and exchange.

a) The first step was to hold a series of international recruitment fairs in Asia, with the first round taking place in May with 18 colleges participating from 12 states. The three-week tour to three countries and six cities in Taiwan, Korea and Japan included a series of events, from the fairs themselves to high school visits to assess the continuing education needs of students, to meetings with Fulbright offices and embassies, to receptions with high-level officials from the Ministries of Education, high school advisors and principals and others interested in educational exchange.

   The dual goals of the fairs were to attract international students to attend U.S. community colleges and to reinforce the credibility of community college education and its key role in higher education. The first fairs began to open doors, create new opportunities, and develop important relationships in the effort to educate international audiences about the value of community college education.

b) The *International Student Study Guide* is about to be published and is the only international student reference guide geared to community colleges. The guide is designed to reach, inform, assist and inspire international students who would like to continue their higher education in the United States. Approximately 40 community colleges participated in the first edition, which will be distributed to the top 25 countries from which international students originate.

c) An International Student web site, to be launched in August, will offer advice, strategies, information, and guidance to assist foreign high school students who want to study in the United States. The site will be specially tailored for specific countries and individual needs. In addition, online (virtual) international recruitment fairs will take place via the Internet, thus extending the reach worldwide. Over 35 community colleges will be featured initially, with a target of several hundred colleges participating in the next few years.

2. AACC monitors the SEVIS regulations on an ongoing basis and keeps the membership up to date through the web site. Due to a growing concern by community college international program leaders about visa denials in China and Vietnam for students seeking a community college education, AACC is considering ways to be more pro-active in this area. Ideas include taking a survey of colleges to better identify problems, followed by some meetings in Washington with appropriate State Department officials, ambassadors, etc.

3. Planning is under way for a 2003 China-U.S. Conference on Community Colleges in Beijing which AACC will be actively involved. A steering committee, chaired by Paul Elsner (former chancellor of Maricopa) also includes Jess Carreon (Portland Community College), Phil Day (San Francisco City College), John Frankenstein (Community Colleges in China Project, funded by the Ford Foundation), Brenda Knight (ACCT's incoming Board Chair fromPeralta Community College), Piedad Robertson (Santa Monica), Kathy Schatzberg (Cape Code Community College), Bill Vega (Coast Community College District), Gwendolyn Stephenson (Highline Community College) and Mark Wen (North Seattle Community College). There are also several members on the steering committee who are from China.

4. The Stanley Foundation will publish a new report in late August, *The Intercultural Connection: Global Education in Community Colleges.* The report is based upon dialogue That took place at a conference in March 2002 with a group of 22 leaders from community colleges, universities and the business community to discuss what it means for community colleges to develop inter-culturally competent learners. The conference was convened by the Stanley Foundation in partnership with AACC, ACIIE, CCIE and ACCT.

   The report emphasizes that global education is not truly global unless both the international and intercultural elements are present and well integrated. The challenge to community colleges is to make this link comprehensible to their internal and external communities and to develop their learners as fully competent citizens of the world. A variety of recommended resources to support campus initiatives in international and intercultural education is also included.

   This report will be widely distributed at the start of the fall term to community college presidents, trustees, global education coordinators, federal and state agencies, including the appropriate White House policy offices, federal and state legislators, global education organizations, and the media.

5. International visitors continue to visit AACC to understand the mission and values of America's community colleges. In June, a large delegation from the Korean Council for College Education (KCEE) spent several hours with AACC staff. KCCE is a special organization under the Ministry of Education & Human Resources Development in Korea and consists of all 159 Korean junior colleges (17 are national and public and 142 are private). The group was interested in learning about vocational education training programs in the U.S. Community colleges and business-education relationships. Following their trip to Washington, D.C., the group visited LaGuardia Community College.

6. As a member of the Steering Committee, AACC participated in a late June meeting for the Denmark/U.S. MOU-generated collaborative project on Information Technology. This effort focuses attention on various professional and institutional partnership activities embodied in the government-to-government MOU as well as the association-to-association MOU.

7. AACC will co-sponsor a press event with the Hispanic Press Foundation to promote the new printed and online versions of the *Hispanic Scholarship Directory.* The event will be held later this summer.

8. Community College Press has published new versions of the *Community College Story* and the *Pocket Profile of Community Colleges* in Chinese. These add to existing editions of *CC Story* published in Spanish, French, and Russian.

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